GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:7
ANSWERED ON:16.11.2016
Vulgartity in TV Programme
Sigriwal Shri Janardan Singh

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has taken cognizance rise in obscenity, vulgarity and nudity in the television programmes in the country;

(b) if so, the details of channels against whom action has been taken for violating the norms/guidelines during the last three years and the current year;

(c) whether there is any self regulation in place to check/curb vulgarity and indecency in programmes telecast on TV channels and if so, the details in the this regard; and

(d) the steps taken/being taken by the Government to monitor the content of the programmes being telecast on Doordarshan and Private channels?

Answer

MINISTER OF INFORMATION & BROADCASTING
(SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU)

(a) to (d): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

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STATEMENT AS REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (d) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 7 FOR ANSWER ON 16.11.2016

(a) to (d): As per existing regulatory framework, all programmes telecast on TV channels are required to adhere to the Programme Code prescribed under the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 and Cable Television Network Rules, 1994 framed thereunder. The Act does not provide for pre-censorship of any programme telecast on such TV channels. However, it prescribes that all programmes telecast on such TV channels should be in conformity with the prescribed Programme Code enshrined in the said Act and the rules framed thereunder, which contains a whole range of parameters to regulate programmes including content of obscenity, vulgarity and nudity in TV programmes.

Ministry has constituted an Inter Ministerial Committee (IMC) to look into the violations suo-motu or whenever violation of the Programme and Advertising Codes is brought to the notice of this Ministry in respect of private satellite TV channels by vigilant citizens about objectionable content on TV. IMC has representatives from the Ministry of Home Affairs, Defence, External Affairs, Law, Women and Child Development, Health and Family Welfare, Consumer Affairs and a representative from the industry in Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI). IMC meets periodically and recommends action in respect of violations. Details of action taken on violation of Programme Code by private TV channels for telecast of content of obscenity, vulgarity and nudity in TV programmes during the last three years and the current year are enclosed at Annexure.

TV channels are required to preserve a copy of their telecast for 90 days. In case a violation is reported they are obliged to share the recordings and archive it until the matter is resolved.

Government has encouraged self-regulation in electronic media by the Industry. News Broadcasters Association (NBA), which represents Private television news and current affairs broadcasters, as part of its self-regulation mechanism, has formulated a Code of Ethics and Broadcasting Standards covering a wide range of principles to self-regulate news broadcasting. NBA has also formulated News Broadcasting Standards Regulations. They have set up a Two-Tier structure to deal with content related complaints- at Tier I, by the individual broadcasters and at Tier II, by News Broadcasting Standards Authority (NBSA). The Authority consists of a Chairperson who is a retired Judge of the Supreme Court and eight other members. Members of the Authority comprise of 4 (four) eminent editors employed with broadcaster and 4 (four) persons having special knowledge and/or practical experience in the field of law, education, medicine, science, literature, public administration, consumer affairs, environment, human psychology and/or culture.

Besides, Indian Broadcasting Foundation (IBF), which represents non-News and entertainment channels, has laid down Content Code & Certification Rules 2011 covering an entire gamut of content-related principles and criterion for television broadcast. As part of self-regulation mechanism, a two-Tier complaints redressal system has been set up by IBF. At the Tier-I level, each Broadcaster has set up a Standard and Practices (S&P) Department with a Content Auditor to deal with the complaints received for content aired

on its channels. At the Tier II, a Broadcast Content Complaints Council (BCCC) has been set up. The BCCC has 13 Members headed by a retired Judge of the Supreme Court or High Court as Chairperson and 12 other Members, viz. 4 eminent persons, 4 members from any National Level Statutory Commissions and 4 Broadcast members and two (2) Special Invitees to deal with complaints against regional language content.

Also, Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI), established in 1985, has set up Consumer Complaints Council (CCC) to consider complaints in respect of advertisements. The CCC currently has 28 members; 12 are from within the industry and 16 are from the civil society like well known doctors, lawyers, journalists, academicians, consumer activists etc.

In so far as Doordarshan Channels are concerned, Doordarshan has its own Broadcasting Code and Social Objectives and advertisement Code for production and telecast of programmes to ensure that no programmes containing obscenity, vulgarity and nudity go on air.

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